

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present patent application based on the foregoing amendments and following remarks are respectfully requested.

By this Amendment, claims 1, 4-7, 24, 43 and 46 are amended to further recite the claimed invention. Claims 2 and 3 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Applicant has merely amended the currently pending claims in order to expedite prosecution and does not, by this amendment, intend to abandon subject matter of the claims as originally filed or later presented, and reserves the right to pursue such subject matter in a continuing application. Applicant has not amended these claims in response to any rejection of the claims and expressly continues to traverse past rejections of the claims. No new matter has been added. Claims 1 and 4-48 are pending in this patent application.

Per telephone conversations with the undersigned on June 12, 2006, July 17, 2006, and July 20, 2006, the Examiner indicated that the claims in this application would be allowed if the substance of claims 2 and 3 were incorporated into the independent claims 1, 43 and 46. Applicant has amended the independent claims 1, 43 and 46 to incorporate the substance of claims 2 and 3 and thus requests allowance of the claims and this application. If questions relating to patentability remain, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to discuss them.

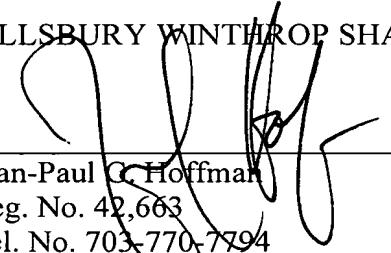
Applicant has amended claims 1, 4, 7, 24, 43 and 46 to confirm that the claims specify that one or more of the items listed may be selected, rather than one or more of each of the items listed must be selected. In claim 4 as an example, the unique reference may be, for example, item (a), or item (b), or item (c), or any combination of items (a)-(c). The unique reference in claim 4 need not be the combination of items (a), (b) and (c), although it could be. Moreover, by these amendments, Applicant does not exclude that more than one of an item may be selected. In claim 4 as an example, the unique reference may be, for example, one item (a), or a plurality of items (a), or one item (b), or a plurality of items (b), or one item (a) and a plurality of items (b), or a plurality of items (a) and a plurality of items (b), etc.

Claims 5 and 6 have been amended merely to correct their dependency.

Should any fees be due, please charge them to our deposit account no. 03-3975, under our order no. 061047/0265649. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

PILLSBURY WINTHROP SHAW PITTMAN LLP

  
Jean-Paul G. Hoffman  
Reg. No. 42,663  
Tel. No. 703-770-7794  
Fax No. 703-770-7901

JGH  
P.O. Box 10500  
McLean, VA 22102  
(703) 770-7900